



SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS  
COMMUNICATIONS

# NEWS

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January 3, 2003

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Sedgwick County Announces \$5.3 million in 2003 Budget Reductions**

(Sedgwick County, Kansas) – The Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners held a special meeting on January 3 to hear a presentation on reductions to the 2003 Sedgwick County budget. County Manager Bill Buchanan recommended \$5.3 million in reductions due to recent State cuts and decreases in local revenues.

In late November 2002, Governor Graves announced cuts to local governments, with over \$4 million in cuts to Sedgwick County Government -- \$1.2 million to 2002 and \$3.2 million in cuts for 2003 (through June 30). In addition, because of a struggling local economy, revenues from local taxes are declining, including decreasing sales tax revenue and an increasing delinquency rate for payment of property taxes.

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Sedgwick County announced over \$5.3 million of expenditure reductions, including layoffs of 10 employees and deleting 18 positions. Other parts of the plan to reduce expenditures include:

- Freeze employee merit raises and longevity pay for 2003
- Dental benefits – employees will be required to pay 18% of the dental premium
- Stringent internal controls
  - County Manager approval for hiring
  - County Manager approval for travel
  - County vehicle usage will be reviewed
  - County cell phones will be reviewed
- Forgo technology and software purchases and upgrades
- Reduce training budget for employees
- Reduce funding to “Prevention Funds” by 10%

“We have seen the effects of a downturn in our economy through layoffs at other businesses and organizations in our community,” said Sedgwick County Commission Chairman Ben Sciortino. “Unfortunately, the economic conditions and State cuts have also affected local government. We must make some serious business decisions on how to reduce expenditures in order to provide essential services to citizens,” said Sciortino.

Sedgwick County provides a range of services to all the citizens in Sedgwick County, including those who live within Wichita and the other 19 cities. Services include public safety, corrections, mental health, aging, community development, public works and general government services. For more information about Sedgwick County, visit the website at [www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org).

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